

1. **The push to redefine marriage** as other than the union of a man and a woman is the most pertinent example of the way in which the right to freedom of religion or belief is being brought into question in Australia.

- Many people will not agree with redefining marriage as other than the union of a man and a woman. If marriage were so redefined it would expose people and organisations to the risk of complaints under state and territory anti-discrimination laws if they express their view of marriage or cannot comply with or conform to changed social, educational or legal requirements that flow from that redefinition. There are huge implications, not just for religious freedoms but for other rights and freedoms such as freedom of speech, employment and education.

- The right to freedom of religion does include the freedom to practice those beliefs – it is not confined only to being free to worship.

- This is clearly recognised in both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPRs, Article 18 ) which expressly provides “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to ... to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.” The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHRs, Article18) also recognises the right of freedom of religion to include the right “to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.”

- There are numerous precedents in foreign jurisdictions of business people being prosecuted and fined for declining to provide services for same-sex weddings on grounds of religious beliefs or conscience. [Here](#) are some of them.

2. **Anti-discrimination laws** in Australian states and territories, which provide that you cannot discriminate on the grounds of a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity, mean that people and organisations would be exposed to the risk of complaints of discrimination if they did not agree with or cannot comply with or conform to changed social, educational or legal requirements that flow from a redefinition of marriage as other than the union of a man and a woman.

- Rights and freedoms such as free speech, the prior right of parents to decide the education they want for their children and the right to hold and express religious or cultural beliefs about marriage without being discriminated against in employment or education would all be impacted by anti-discrimination laws if marriage were so redefined. [More](#).

3. **Laws taking away the right to conscience:**

- The right to conscientious objection in health care is seriously impacted by

- Abortion laws which require health professionals to refer a patient to another practitioner if they have a conscientious objection to abortion. Section 8 of the Victorian

Abortion Law Reform Act and Section 7 of the Tasmanian Reproductive Health (Access to Terminations) Act.

- Proposed euthanasia/assisted dying laws in Australia have had similar provisions.
- Laws such as Victoria's Health Complaints Act 2016 which restrict counsellors in counselling on homosexual attraction. [More](#).

#### **4. Laws that restrict freedom of assembly.**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 20 (1)) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 21) both recognise the right to “the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association”.

In Australia freedom of association is restricted by:

- Part 9A of the Public Health and Well Being Amendment (Safe Access Zones) Act 2008 Victoria; and
- Section 9 of the Tasmanian Reproductive Health (Access to Terminations) Act 2013

which prohibit any communication or protest in relation to abortions within a radius of 150 metres of premises where abortions are provided.

And Clause 24 of the Queensland Health (Abortion Law Reform) Amendment Bill 2016 also seeks to prohibit “a protest by any means” within 50 metres of an abortion facility which is declared a “protected area.”

The following 71 people submitted versions of a Form Letter which were identical or substantially similar to Form Letter 1.

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| Pastor Tim                           |
| John & Cheryl Field                  |
| Bob Healy                            |
| James Pemberton                      |
| Mark McGowan                         |
| Annie Hall Bowden                    |
| Angela Khan                          |
| Maureen du Preez                     |
| Dominica Wyndham                     |
| Peter Lutze                          |
| Annette Cosgrove                     |
| Hendrik & Wilhelmina Roelofs         |
| Excelsa Glinoga                      |
| Euan McDonald                        |
| Dr and Mrs David & Patricia Christie |
| Brian Fusco                          |
| Ian S Moller                         |
| Mervy Ardé                           |
| Rowan Shann                          |
| Vito & Lynette Cuzzubbo              |
| Dean Sargent                         |
| Christine Gannon                     |
| Rev Ricky Tan                        |
| Ray Wong                             |
| Robert Koomans                       |
| Patti Parkinson                      |
| Jean Docker                          |
| Joseph Francis                       |
| Kristina Psychogios                  |
| Mike & Filifau Adamson               |
| Trevor Turner                        |
| Yvonne Nash                          |
| Johaen Ernest                        |
| David & Rosa McManamey               |
| Rowena Bowes                         |
| Anthony Ewart                        |

|                           |
|---------------------------|
| Barbara Brown             |
| Patricia Anderson         |
| Rocco Loiacono            |
| Pascal Van Mello          |
| Dudley Smith              |
| Mrs Helen F Lauritz       |
| David Edwards             |
| Taryn Haynes              |
| Shann & Jennifer Kellaway |
| Warren & Sue Lewis        |
| Vivian Schmiedte          |
| Lidija Kerekes            |
| Douglas Mendez            |
| Dennis Robson             |
| Sita De Haan              |
| Peter Cross               |
| Gerard & Anne Marie Leahy |
| Marie Riviere             |
| Walter Morrison           |
| Mrs Lorraine Twentyman    |
| Sue Innes                 |
| Carolyn Edgar             |
| Leah Brimson              |
| Judith Gray               |
| Daniel & Jennifer Avenall |
| Michael D Fewster         |
| Marika Stefaniw           |
| Jill & Henry James        |
| Margaret Farley           |
| Swan Cheng Tan            |
| Greg Byrne                |
| Elizabeth Golingi         |
| Michelle McCoy            |
| Neil Robinson             |
| Dr Kevin Wilkinson        |